



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

October 4, 2007

Mr. John B. Catoe, Jr.
General Manager
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 Fifth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Catoe:

Montgomery County has been working closely for several years with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) staff on the Takoma Station Joint Development to satisfy our Ride On bus operations, pedestrian safety, and mobility-impaired access to transit. While we have previously indicated that the technical bus (Ride On and Metrobus) requirements may have been met, I believe that a number of issues, including pedestrian safety and mobility-impaired access, are still unresolved.

In May 2007, I met with the City of Takoma Park as well as the District of Columbia and Maryland community and business representatives and toured the Takoma Metrorail Station. I observed firsthand the existing pedestrian safety issues and handicapped access to the station. As a follow up to this meeting, I asked the Department of Public Works and Transportation to meet with the developer and WMATA to examine these safety and access issues and to report progress back to me. This collaborative effort did produce several improvements and I thank you for that. However, these changes are insufficient and do not fully address all of the key pedestrian and vehicular safety issues. These include:

- the safety of the pedestrians crossing the main bus entrance is in conflict with buses entering and exiting from Carroll Street; and
- the inconvenience of handicapped rider drop-off and access to the elevator entrance to the station.

The proposed new bus entrance from Carroll Street does not improve the existing pedestrian crossing since it moves it closer to the station entrance reducing the area for pedestrian circulation and staging. In addition, the EYA plan permits the mixing of private vehicles and transit buses in the traffic circle. This layout may invite handicapped drop-off in the traffic circle to access the station elevator entrance since the formal Kiss and Ride area is within the parking garage further away and not visible from the roadway.

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I strongly recommend that the WMATA postpone formal action on the public hearing and staff recommendations in order for us to comprehensively work with all of the impacted parties to ensure that all of these concerns are adequately addressed. Pedestrian safety is one of my highest priorities and major transit improvements must be designed for pedestrian safety from the start. I strongly believe that it would be a mistake to proceed with a design that we know will result in significant and unnecessary pedestrian and vehicular hazards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Isiah Leggett", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

IL:mb

cc: Gordon Linton, WMATA Board Member
Peter Benjamin, WMATA Board Member
Kathy Porter, Mayor, City of Takoma Park